

# WU TING FANG SAYS AMERICANS MAY SOME DAY BE YELLOW

China's Former Envoy Sees Punishment in Kind Coming for Laws Against Saffron Races—His Comments on This "Remarkable Land" Include Words on Fashions, Food, Bryan and Bare-Legged Chorus Girls.

HOW ex-Minister Wu Ting-fang nearly sat in a Jim Crow waiting room, because one door was marked "For Whites" and another "For Blacks," but nothing for black-and-tan or peach color was provided in his new book, "America Through the Eyes of an Oriental Diplomat," to be published during the coming week by the Frederick A. Stokes Company. For America has inspired him—America, "that remarkable land," where "one man may kill another, and by the wonderful process of the law escape the extreme penalty of death," where "lynching is tolerated or impossible of prevention," where "you may travel by rail most comfortably in palace cars and, sleeping at night in a Pullman, awake in the morning to learn that a young lady has occupied the berth above your bed"; where Merry Widow hats are worn by spinsters as well as by those whose husbands are much alive, and where "Millions of dollars are spent to build a tunnel under a river merely to save two or three minutes of the time of this most remarkable people."

In the first place Minister Wu objected to writing about the Americans, not wishing to criticize and not feeling able to praise in every respect a people who had been "generous, courteous and kind," but he was finally persuaded by a lady friend, who told him that her countrymen always liked to hear about themselves, no matter what the author had to say.

## PASSION FOR THE THEATRE INCOMPREHENSIBLE.

Our passion for the theatre is incomprehensible to him. In China, until very recently, the actor has been despised and debarred from all honorable callings because of the insincerity of his profession. If we must have plays, he says, let them have a moral and a happy ending. Of what use is the following song of music hall flavor:

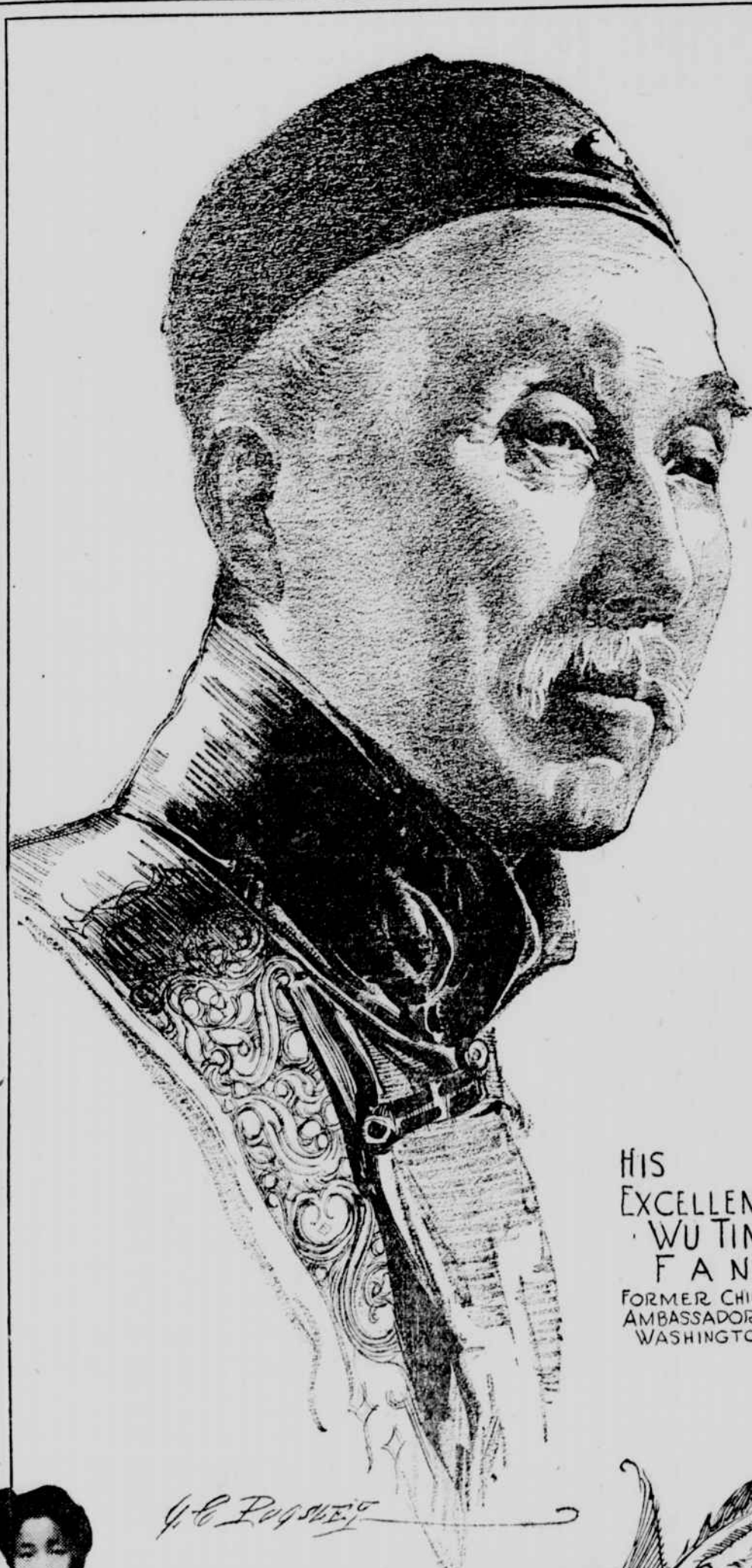
THE SONG NOT WORTH SINGING.  
"Can you spare a glance,  
Have we got a chance?  
You've got a knowing pair of eyes,  
When it's two to one,  
It isn't much fun."  
This is what she soon replies:

cal comedy producers, following their usual custom of religiously avoiding anything original, began to send pony ballets and soubrettes on the stages without their hosiery and with their knees clad in nothing but a coat of whitewash (sometimes they left off the whitewash, and then the sight was horrible). The human form divine, with few exceptions, is a devilish spectacle unless it is properly made up. Some twenty years from now managers will discover what audiences found out months ago, that a chorus girl's bare leg is infinitely less beautiful than the same leg when duly disguised by petticoats and tights.

How Minister Wu once brought affinities together, he tells in a sprightly fashion almost up to Laura Jean Libbey. He had been invited to attend the wedding of the daughter of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

## AFFINITIES UNITED THROUGH KIND OFFICES OF WU.

"When I entered the breakfast room I saw the bridesmaids and a number of young men. Going up to one of the bridesmaids whom I had previously met, and who was the daughter of a Senator, I asked her when it would be her turn to become a bride. She modestly said that she did not know, as she had not yet had an offer. Turning to the group of young men who were in the room I familiarly remarked to one of them: 'This is a beautiful lady—would not you like to marry her?' He replied: 'I should be most delighted.' Then I said to the young lady: 'Will you accept his offer?' She seemed slightly embarrassed and said something to the effect that as she did not know the gentleman she could not give a definite answer. After a few days I met the young lady at an 'at home' party, where she scolded me for being so blunt with her before the young men. I told her I was actuated by the best of motives, and a few months later I received an invitation from the young lady's parents inviting me to be present at their daughter's marriage. I thought I would go and find out whether the bridegroom was the young man whom I had introduced to the young lady, and as soon



HIS EXCELLENCY WU TING FANG FORMER CHINESE AMBASSADOR AT WASHINGTON

Noted Oriental Diplomat Mingles Words of Praise with Adverse Criticism—His Impressions on "Merchant Princes" and "Copper Kings" Lead Him to Suggest Title of Emperor for Nation's Head.

eral, colonel, major, president, judge, etc. You will not be far wrong to call a man judge when he is a lawyer; or colonel if he has served in the army, or admiral or captain if he has been in the navy. Though neither the federal nor the state government has power to confer titles, the magnates do. They see that dukes and other peers are created in Europe and that the partners in the big, wealthy firms over there are called 'merchant princes.' And so to outdo them, they arrogate to themselves a still higher title. Hence they are 'railroad kings,' 'copper kings,' 'tobacco kings,' etc. It is, however, manifestly improper and incongruous that the people should possess a higher title than their chief, who is the head of the nation. To make it even I would suggest that the name of President be changed to that of Emperor. There is no reason whatever why he should not be so styled, as by virtue of his high office he possesses almost as much power as the most aristocratic ruler of any nation. Second, it would clearly demonstrate the sovereign power of the people; a people who could make and unmake an emperor would certainly be highly respected. I make this suggestion

that the injury they are now inflicting on the yellow people they may themselves have to suffer in another life."

Regarding the term "yellow people," Minister Wu also makes the observation that we may ourselves become yellow some day, at least, those of us who lead our lives in tropical and Asiatic countries, and our own laws against the saffron races thus recoil upon ourselves. He quotes Mrs. Annie Besant, who says: "In Australia a very curious change is taking place. Color has very much deepened in that clime, and the Australian has become very yellow; so that it becomes a problem whether, after a time, the people would be allowed to live in their own country. The white people are far more colored than are some Indians."

"In the face of this plain fact," Minister Wu asks if it is not time for their own sake "that the Australians should drop their cry against yellow people and induce their Parliament to abolish or at least to modify their immigration laws with regard to the yellow race?"

## OUR "SUPERIORITY" UNJUSTIFIED BY FACTS.

There is no reason, he says, to justify "those who hold that the white people are superior to the yellow people in intellect, in education, in taste and in habits, and that the yellow people are unworthy to associate with them. In China we have manners, we have art, we have morals, and we have managed a fairly large society for thousands of years without



TWO CHINESE ACTORS ONE DRESSED AS A LADY



PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING THE SUPERIORITY OF THE DRESS OF CHINESE WOMEN TO THAT OF AMERICAN WOMEN © FREDERICK A. STOKES CO

"Oh, won't you buy a race card, and take a tip from me? If you want to find a winner, it's easy as can be. When the Cupid Stakes are starting Your heads are all awl, And my tip to-day Is a bit each way. On the race card girl."

"It may be due to my ignorance of the English language," he writes, "but the song I have just quoted seems to me to be silly, and I don't think any ragtime music could make it worth singing."

## ISADORA DUNCAN AND THE SALOME PLAQUE.

"To inform Miss Isadora Duncan that she has been the means of making nudity popular in musical farce," continues the austere Chinaman, "would beyond question incur the lady's very reasonable wrath. But it is none the less true. When the bare-legged classical dancer made her appearance in opera houses and on concert platforms with symphony or orchestras, it was the cue for every chorus girl with an ambition to undress in public. First of all, we had a plague of Salomes. Then the musi-

as I entered the house the mother of the bride, to my agreeable surprise, informed me that it was I who had brought the young couple together, and both bride and bridegroom heartily thanked me for my good offices."

## FASHION THE WORK OF THE DEVIL, SAYS WU.

"Fashion," says Wu, "is the work of the devil. When he made up his mind to enslave mankind he found in fashion his most effective weapon. When I discarded Chinese clothes in favor of European dress I soon found it very uncomfortable. In the winter it was not warm enough, but in the summer it was too warm, because it was so tight. Then I had trouble with the shoes. They gave me the most distressing corns. When on returning to China I resumed my national costume my corns disappeared."

He quotes a case where a young girl lost her life by being transformed into a female parachute by a gust of wind. "Had the poor girl been wearing Chinese clothing this terrible occurrence could not have

happened."

Dinners and banquets are much discussed by Minister Wu, who says that man is a gregarious animal, and in taking his food he likes company, but that in attending dinner parties the guests as a rule "do not seek sustenance, they only go to them when they have nothing else to do, and many scarcely touch the food that is laid before them."

"At a fashionable dinner," he continues, "no one can possibly taste, much less eat, everything that is placed before him, and yet the food is so nicely cooked and served in so appetizing a manner that it is difficult to resist the temptation to at least sample it, and once you have done that you will continue eating until it is all finished, but your stomach will probably be a sad sufferer, groaning grievously on the following day on account of the frolic of your palate."

"As a rule dinner conversation is seldom worth remembering, which is a pity. Man, the most sensible of all animals, can talk nonsense better than all the rest of his tribe. Perhaps the flow of words may be

as steady as the eastward flow of the Yang-tse Kiang in my own country, but the memory only retains a recollection of a vague, undefined—what? The conversation, like the flavors provided by the cooks, has been evanescent. Why should not hostesses make as much effort to stimulate the minds of their guests as they do to gratify their palates? What a boon it would be to many a bashful man sitting next to a lady with whom he has nothing in common, if some public entertainer during the dinner relieved him from the necessity of always thinking as to what he should say next." How much more he could enjoy the tasty dishes his hostess had provided, and as for the lady—what a number of suppressed yawns she might have avoided!

"The dinner party has its dangers as well as its advantages. Personal peculiarities and defects, if any, can easily be detected by the way in which the conversation is carried on and the manner in which the food is handled. It has sometimes happened that the alliance have cancelled their engagement after a dinner party."

## PRAISE FOR BRYAN'S LIQUOR DODGING.

Secretary Bryan's "noble example" in dodging liquor and compelling his guests to do likewise is praised by the Chinaman. But watered stock is not so highly thought of, and whether or not such action really is justified, or even moral, he leaves to "the Christian clergy and their followers to decide." The promoters and directors of such concerns have at least hit upon a very clever method of becoming rich," he says, "and if the securities of the original shareholders are not injured, perhaps such an action may be less blamable, but it is a new kind of proceeding for the Orientals."

We are always in a hurry, he thinks, and altogether too intent on making

money. The Stock Exchange is the most curious sight that he has ever seen. It is used as a market, but there were no goods, exposed for sale. "I saw a good many people running about, talking, yelling and howling, and had I not been informed beforehand what to expect I should have thought that the men in their excitement were getting ready for an all-round fight. However, I did not see any exchange of blows, and I did not hear that any blood was shed. Another remarkable feature of the scene was that I did not see a single woman there; she was conspicuous by her absence."

## WEALTH THE CHIEF AIM OF AMERICAN PEOPLE.

"The pursuit of wealth in America is intense. It is apparent everywhere and seems to be the chief aim of the American people. Because of their eagerness to become rich as soon as possible they are all in a constant hurry. You may see people in the streets almost running to their offices; at luncheon they do not masticate their food, they bolt it, and in less than ten minutes are on their way back to their offices again. Every one is urged on by this spirit of haste, and you frequently hear of sudden deaths, which doctors attribute to heart failure or some other malady, but which I suspect are caused by the continual restless hurry and worry. People who are so unnaturally eager to get rich naturally suffer for it."

Much is said by the minister about the lack of titles in this country and the result of this lack among a people who will climb telegraph poles to catch a glimpse of the bride and bridegroom when some titled foreigner carries off the daughter of a beef baron or a coal king.

"Mister is too tame and flat for the go-ahead Americans," says Minister Wu. "Hence half of the people whom you meet daily have some prefix to their names, such as gen-

seriously, and hope it will be adopted."

## INQUISITIVENESS OF AMERICAN WOMEN.

While he thinks that in intellect American women have shown themselves the equals, if not the superiors, of American men, and cites cases where the husband is only too glad to have his wife "rule the roost," to come under her judgment and guidance and to wear the rubbers that she brings him, he declares that one fault can be found with them on the ground of their inquisitiveness. "I know that this is a common fault with all women, but it is most conspicuous in the Americans. They have the knack of finding out things without your being aware of it, and if they should want to know your history they will learn all about it after a few minutes' conversation. They are good detectives, and I think they should be employed in that line more than they are."

In speaking of reincarnation, in which he is an earnest believer, Minister Wu says that he thinks he was born and brought up during some previous existence in the United States of America.

## REINCARNATION—A WARNING TO THE EXCLUSIVE.

"Those who believe in reincarnation (and I hope most of my readers do, as it is a clew to many mysteries) understand that when people are reincarnated they are not always born in the same country or continent as in their previous life. I have an impression that in one of my previous existences on earth I was born and brought up in the United States of America. In saying this, I do not express the slightest regrets at having now been born in Asia. I only wish to give a hint to those white people who advocate an exclusive policy that in their next life they may be born in Asia or in Africa, and

the bitter class hatreds, class distinctions and class struggles that have marred the fair progress of the West. We have not enslaved our lives to wealth. We like luxury, but we like other things better. We love life more than chasing imitations of life. Our differences of color, like our differences of speech, are purely natural."

## NOT SUPERSTITIOUS, BUT COFFIN WAS TOO MUCH.

"In Washington I once met a man in an elevator whose name was 'Coffin.' Was I to be blamed for wondering if the elevator would be my coffin? On another occasion I met a man whose name was Death, and as soon as I heard his name I felt inclined to run away, for I did not wish to die. I am not superstitious. I have frequently taken dinner with thirteen persons at the table, and I do not hesitate to start on a journey on Friday. I often do things which would not be done by superstitious persons in China. But to meet a man calling himself 'Coffin' or 'Death' was too much for me, and with all my disbelief in superstition I could not help showing some repugnance to those who bore such names."

While he believes that the Chinese have much to learn from Western athletics, hunting is absolutely condemned by him. "The peace societies should take this matter up," he says, "for hunting is an imitation of war and an apprenticeship to it. It certainly can find no justification in any of the great world religions, and not even the British or German, who idolize soldiers, would immortalize a man simply because he was a hunter. From whatever point the subject be viewed, it seems undeniable that hunting is only a survival of savagery." Of all the nations in the world, he says, America is the most interesting to the Chinese.